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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KINSHASA 000699

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SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE PROFILE: SENATOR ANATOLE
MATUSILA

Classified By: A/DCM MSanderson, reasons 1.4 b/d.

11. (C) PolCouns met May 2 with presidential aspirant, and current Senator, Anatole Matusila. Matusila is one of about a dozen serious candidates (among the 33 on the list) for the presidential post. A well-liked man, Matusila usually is characterized as "moral" and "honest," and bills himself as the informal candidate of the Catholic Church. (Note: The Church has not officially endorsed a candidate, but Cardinal Frederic Etsou has provided a list of characteristics defining a candidate who in the church's view would merit attention. Interestingly, the characteristics provided seem to exclude, for various reasons, most of the candidates who are members of the current government. End Note.) Refreshingly realistic, Matusila admits that he doesn't think he can win alone, and for that reason is working to head a "moral coalition" which would include other candidates. The members of this coalition essentially would "pool" their votes to ensure his, Matusila's, victory in a second-round runoff against (most likely) current President Kabila. PolCouns explored Matusila's presidential vision regarding security, economics and politics.

Security: Dialog Is the Answer

12. (C) Acknowledging that security is the single biggest issue for all Congolese, but particularly those in the East, Matusila said it would of course be essential to convince the FDLR to leave the DRC. New avenues of dialog should be opened up, he said, perhaps through invoking the expanded involvement of the Catholic Church. He admitted, with clear distaste, that "some sort" of military option might be needed, and said that he has been told already several times by residents of South Kivu that immediate military action is the only means by which to force the FDLR out of Congo. Still, he would prefer to convince FDLR elements to return peacefully, rather than perpetuate a cycle of violence. Much more and better training would be required for the future Congolese military, which should be placed more directly under the control of officers who already have benefited from foreign military training in any country. The military could be as small as 50,000, Matusile said, as long as it was well-trained.

Economics: More Foreign Assistance Needed

13. (C) In the economic arena Matusila favors privatization, including of Congo's parastatals, and envisions a program of

regional development which would, for instance, support: agro-business in Bandundu and Bas Congo; mining in the Kasais, Katanga, the Kivus and Orientale province; and forestry in Equateur. He is an unabashed fan of federalism, with attendant redivision of revenue, ensuring that eventually the provinces keep 60% of all revenue and 40% would go to Kinshasa (a mirror reversal of the current proposal, itself considered almost revolutionary by some). Foreign assistance would be needed in vast amounts, however, to address Congo's infrastructure, since the scope of the problem far exceeds, he said, anything which the private sector could be expected to handle. The central government should also guarantee loans to small Congolese businesses to provide a form of "seed capital" to jump-start legitimate economic development.

Politics: Smaller Is Better

14. (C) Consistent with his federalist bent, Matusila favors a smaller government in Kinshasa. He would have a maximum of three State Ministers and twelve Ministers. The major policy objective of his new government would be to ensure full cooperation and coordination between Kinshasa and the provinces to devolve authority to the provinces. International assistance will be needed to help "train" the new generation of politicians, particularly in the provincial parliaments, to try to reduce the potential for chaos. In a similar vein, one of his most difficult choices would be the post of President of the National Assembly, since the Assembly likely could prove fractious with so many independents and so few established political parties.

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Comment

15. (C) Matusila, who speaks in a deep voice and measured cadence, projects the image of a sage man, white-haired and experienced. He -- or someone -- clearly has given some thought to important campaign planks. If he truly is the Church's candidate (which isn't clear at the moment), he could be worth watching as the race really gets under way.
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